

## "HOLLY ROLLERS."

By Women Who Were Duped by the Prophecy.

The following from a widow woman has been duped by the "holly rollers" of Durant and which was published in the Tampa Tribune, will be of interest to many of our readers:

Yesterday morning, three widows of many years, made their way back to Tampa from Durant and one of them, Mrs. L. Mattox, reported at the phone office. Her story is a remarkable one:

"It was last week," she said, "that the prophecy of the destruction of Tampa was made. It came from Mrs. Van Sickle, who lives at Durant. She pretended to hear the message direct from the Holy Ghost and it included the date—Monday night—and the statement that only the corporate limits of Tampa would be affected, but this city was to sink in general wreck and ruin. The 'divine message,' it was said, was translated by Mrs. Van Sickle's son, Howard Van Sickle. As soon as the prophecy was communicated among the members of the Holy Ghosters' flock, there was great excitement and I and all my friends were deeply alarmed. I decided, however, that I would stick in Tampa and go down with it, comes what may.

"Sunday afternoon, the Van Sickle sent in couriers to give another warning to the faithful. This time, it sounded straight and I quit my \$9 a month job and hiked to the country. With me in the same direction, went about twenty others, some of them giving away all they had, others selling out for what they could get on the spur of the moment and joining the saved.

"At Durant, we found the Van Sickle and some twenty others, huddled together in prayer. We found but little accommodation but, by Divine dispensation, probably, the Van Sickle had provided a lunch counter where our hunger could be satisfied for cash. It was the greatest influx of people that Durant ever saw and things boomed there for a while. The Methodist minister there advised us that we were foolish and that we ought to go back home, but we were carried away by the harangues of Van Sickle and his mother and I am sure that I was hypnotized for the time being.

"When Monday night came, we listened, between prayers and exhortations, for the noise of the destruction of Tampa, but we heard nothing alarming. Next day, when we found out that the city had not been destroyed, we began to doubt, but the Van Sickle said the date in the message had been misinterpreted and that it was yet to come. Someone heard that the Six Mile creek bridge had been destroyed, and Van Sickle said: 'See—the Lord has destroyed the bridge, so you cannot return to the doomed city.' Did you ever hear such stuff?"

Mrs. Mattox said that she and her two companions were the first to leave the Durant assembly and that about 35 Tampa people are there yet still under the sway of the Van Sickle. "When we left, they told us we were going to our death, but I shouted Tampa was good enough for me and, if it sank, I would sink with it. I spent all my money, lost my position, and am back here penniless, all on account of listening to such fakers."

The widows who returned with Mrs. Mattox are Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Wright, who live near Ybor City. The latter was conducting a small restaurant on Seventh avenue, when she received the warning, and sold it out for a mere pittance, in order to be relieved of any interests in doomed Tampa.

This woman went on further to tell of one of the men of the sect at Durant and been found out just in time to prevent his eloping with another man's wife.

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Think of Dr. Cheatham of Havana. Dr. H. H. Cheatham, of Havana, Cuba, accidentally shot himself in the foot while out squirrel hunting a few days ago. He was brought to Tallahassee and placed in the Silver Cross hospital, but the shock of the accident proved too much for his nervous system and he died of heart failure. His body was taken back home for burial.

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Gov. Gilchrist Tells Westerners of Florida's Advantages.

Governor Albert W. Gilchrist, of Florida, has been out to the Seattle Exposition, and has been royally treated in the different states and cities he has visited.

Recently in Oklahoma City, Governor Gilchrist was shown marked attention and interviewed by the newspapers of that city. In the Oklahoman of recent date Governor Gilchrist was quoted as follows:

"Yes, Oklahoma City is a hustler and your young state is a wonder. It has marvelous natural resources and has made an amazing growth in population. However, speaking of general resources, old Florida can also go some in that respect. For instance, DeSoto, the county in which I live, ships 100,000 tons of phosphate a year, 15,000 head of cattle to Cuba alone and hundreds of cars of fresh vegetables. From my home town 7,000,000 pounds of fish are shipped each year, and DeSoto is the greatest orange county in the state, besides its large shipments of timber and turpentine. Around Tallahassee immense quantities of oats, tobacco and cotton are raised. There is not much cotton farther south, as white labor is too expensive, and there are not many negroes there."

An incident of the visit of Gov. Gilchrist to Oklahoma City was his meeting with Mrs. Milton Bryan, of Shawnee. Both she and Judge Bryan are members of well known Florida families. After a brief chat with Mrs. Bryan, the Governor gallantly presented her with his scarf pin, bearing the seal of Florida.

Gov. Gilchrist is a son of Gen. William Gilchrist, and his parents were natives of South Carolina. Gen. Gilchrist was one of the largest slave holders in Florida, as were other relatives of the Governor. As a result of the war, young Gilchrist was compelled to start life at \$15 a month. But he "got there," and is today worth about a million dollars. He has served in the legislature of his state, having been speaker of the house of representatives in 1905. He has held all sorts of military positions and is a veteran of the Spanish-American war, having served as acting major in Cuba.

One of the ancestors of Gov. Gilchrist was a grandfather of George Washington, and another a grandfather of James Madison.

The Oklahoman says Gov. Gilchrist was driven about Oklahoma City with Dr. John Threadgill and I. M. Putnam. The Governor was returning from the Seattle Exposition, where he delivered the "Dixie Day" address on the 24th of August. He stated that he had heard so much about Oklahoma City that he decided to stop off and see the town. Leaving there he went to Little Rock and Memphis.

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